

Canadian Film Weekly

VOICE of the CANADIAN MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY

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Famous' Interest in Spencer

Staff Praised By F. G. Spencer

The announcement of the new partnership between F. G. Spencer and Famous Players was made by the Maritime circuit chief personally in St. John and picked up by the news services. First reports of such news usually come from Famous Players.

(Continued on Page 9)

Bldg. Priority For UK Houses?

If Canada follows the same policy as it is likely Great Britain will, post-war theatre building may be high in the list of priorities, perhaps equal to that of homes.

The British Government is greatly interested in having jobs

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Leading Chain Buys Share in Maritimes 16-Show Circuit

Famous Players Canadian Corporation, Canada's largest motion picture theatre circuit, has acquired an interest in the 16-theatre Maritime circuit, F. G. Spencer Company, Limited, which operates houses in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Spencer houses are located in 12 communities.

Combat Cameraman Badly Injured

Julian Roffman, former producer of military training films for the National Film Board, and serving now as its war correspondent on the Western front, was seriously wounded by mortar fire during recent operations, the board announced last week. Roffman, who worked in Ottawa for more than two years, left Canada last May as special film correspondent for the board in the Western European theatre. With N. C. Read, also of the board, he covered operations immediately after D-Day and the fighting across Western France.

Amusement Tax For Ontario

The Ontario amusement tax, abandoned in June, 1937, will be applied again from April 1 of this year, it is unofficially reported from Queen's Park, Toronto. Added to tickets of admission to movies and other amusements on a basis of 10 per cent, it is ex-

(Continued on Page 9)

Rank's Pub Head

Publicity director of J. A. Rank's enterprises will be John Myers, now in the RAF, formerly with London Films.

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At Benevolent Fund Luncheon



Part of the head table at the recent luncheon in Toronto, called in support of the Pioneer-sponsored benevolent fund, which resulted in an application for a charter to establish a Variety tent in Toronto.

Left to right—Herb Allen, Ben Okun, R. W. Bolstad, Ray Lewis, Leo Devaney, Paul Nathanson, John J. Fitzgibbons and Oscar R. Hanson.

Kennedy Managing Roxy, Cornwall

J. C. Kennedy is now manager of the Roxy, Cornwall, Ontario, Odeon unit. He was transferred from Hamilton to fill the spot opened by the departure of Murray Berg to Toronto as Sam Fingold's supervisor.

No Renewal Between FPCC and F & H

As previously hinted, the agreement between Famous Players and Franklin & Herschorn Theatre Co., Ltd., Maritime circuit of seven theatres, was not renewed. It was a five-year deal which was up last week.

Sask Distrib Area May Be Created

A form of provincial isolationism is what some film men are calling the intention of the CCF government of Saskatchewan to make them establish distribution headquarters in Regina for that province. At present the needs of Saskatchewan exhibitors are served from two centres—Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Calgary, Alberta. The Saskatchewan Censorship Board sits in Winnipeg and will be moved to Regina also if the government goes through with the plan.

There are six film distribution areas in Canada and some serve theatres in several provinces. This system was evolved as the most practicable in a country where transportation charges are a major matter. The distances between theatres is much greater

(Continued on Page 9)

Karr, Toronto Star, Lists 10 Favorites

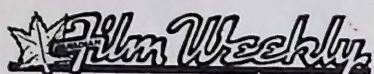
Jack Karr, screen columnist of the Toronto Daily Star, picked 10 favorite 1944 films. They are Cover Girl, Miracle of Morgan's Creek, Gaslight, Two Girls and a Sailor, Thunder Rock, Double Indemnity, Going My Way, Since You Went Away, This Happy Breed and Laura.

Karr said he was not picking "10 best" but his personal favorites in the order of release.

Lake Placid Serenade

musical with a thousand thrills starring Vera Hruba Ralston and Robert Livingston.

It's dazzling!—It's big! Packed with exciting romance, thrilling music, hilarious comedy. It's REPUBLIC'S million dollar comedy. Book it now through EMPIRE-UNIVERSAL.



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Jan. 3, 1945

HYE BOSSIN, Managing Editor

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1895

'From what conceivable
phase of the future can the
movie be debarred? In the
promotion of business
interests, in the
advancement of science, in
the revelation of
unguessed worlds, in its
educational and re-creative
process, in its ability to
immortalize our fleeting but
beloved associations,
the cinematograph stands
foremost among the
creations of modern
inventive genius.'

W. K. L. DICKSON

Associate of Edison, expressed in 1895

1945

Spencer & Famous In Partnership

(Continued from Page 1)

showman.

After the war the companies will undertake a joint program of expansion in Maritime centres. Theatres will be built in Charlottetown, Amherst and Campbellton.

Negotiations with Mr. Spencer were conducted by J. J. Fitzgibbons, president of Famous Players, and Reuben Bolstad, vice-president.

Praises New Partner

"I have known Mr. Spencer for 15 years and am very happy that our organization is finally associated with his company," Mr. Fitzgibbons said. "I have been urging something of this nature for many years.

"The Spencer organization will remain as at present, with Mr. Spencer as its head, and his sons, Gordon and Gerald, and J. G. Armstrong filling the executive positions they now occupy. As conditions permit, the Spencer Company, with the assistance and co-operation of our company, will develop in the three Maritime provinces.

"I would like to add a word of appreciation of Mr. Spencer himself and of the very high regard in which he is held in the motion picture world, where his splendid reputation and that of his company are widely recognized. I might add further that this is one of the most important and probably one of the most pleasant affiliations that Famous Players has made in many years.

Press Echoes 'Fitz'

Maritimes interest found the union of the Spencer Company with Famous Players important news. In an editorial entitled "Milestone in F. G. Spencer's Career" the Saint John, New Brunswick Telegraph Journal commented:

The story of Mr. Spencer is the story of a good citizen who had faith in a new industry and his own part of Canada. Unlike so many Maritimers who sought success far afield, he sought it, and found it, here in the Maritimes. As the moving picture industry has grown, so have his theatre enterprises. Naturally, he has been busy, but never too busy to take part in community affairs, Church affairs, charitable efforts. He has exemplified the best kind of citizenship.

The negotiations just concluded, which link his organization with that of Famous Players, mark a milestone in his career—a career characterized by unselfishness and kindly thoughts for others as well as by business accomplishments. His friends, and they are many, will extend to him warm congratulations, and wish him all success in his future endeavors.

Mr. Spencer's newest business relationship drew many private and public responses, an indication of his standing in the busi-

ness and community life of the Maritimes.

A Bright Career

When Fred G. Spencer entered the movie business more than three decades ago, it was against the advice of his friends. He had returned to Saint John from Victoria to recover from ill health. Although he had seen movies offered to the public in many places as a novelty, he had not realized their growing popularity until he saw the attraction they were beginning to hold for his own neighbors.

Friends told him that they were a fad and wouldn't last but with the resolve that has come to be recognized as an important part of his character, he opened theatres at Summerside, Pictou and Charlottetown. Then he established the Unique in Saint John. Today he controls 16 houses, after selling several before the war. Two of those sold were located in Halifax.

Mr. Spencer had an outstanding reputation in the Canadian theatre and concert field prior to his venture into motion picture business. He was a concert impresario and toured the Dominion as manager of such stars as Madame Albani, Melba and Nordica.

Madame Albani finished one Canadian concert tour at Victoria. She and her young manager were about to depart for a tour that would include Australia, New Zealand and Great Britain when the latter became ill, returned to St. John and decided to move into movies.

There was more to Spencer's action than staking his career on what his friends considered to be a poor risk. By going from the concert field to the motion picture industry, he invited the scorn of most members of the theatre business. Movies were the stepchild of the show world and, as Donald Crisp said recently, actors who played in them hoped their associates wouldn't find out. They were just ashamed to admit that they had fallen so low in either their tastes or fortunes.

It took faith in the future of the motion picture industry, confidence in his own judgment and an indifference to false attitudes for the concert impresario to turn his back on the most dignified field of entertainment in favor of the one least respected by the other members of his profession.

Time proved him right in every respect.

Laura

with Gene Tierney, Dana Andrews,
Clifton Webb

**DISTINGUISHED MYSTERY MELO-
DRAMA STRONGLY FLAVORED
WITH ROMANCE IS HUMDINGER.**

Twentieth Century-Fox has pulled a surprise. This "Laura," based on the Vera Caspary novel, is a most unusual murder mystery strongly marked with distinction. The picture, accorded a polished production by Otto Preminger, to whose deft direction the offering owes much of its success, should prove one of year's most satisfying pictures of its kind.

Jay Dratler, Samuel Hoffenstein and Betty Reinhardt have contributed a literate script set in an atmosphere of sophistication. The story heavily flavored with romance, has been intriguingly developed and acted out capitably.

While Gene Tierney and Dana Andrews add luster to their acting careers as the stars of the film, it is Clifton Webb, who, playing his first role in pictures, rates special attention as a cynical man-about-town who, in attempting to kill Miss Tierney to prevent anyone else from having her, slays another person by mistake. Andrews enacts a detective who, in working on the case, falls in love with Miss Tierney.

CAST: Gene Tierney, Dana Andrews, Clifton Webb, Vincent Price, Judith Anderson, Dorothy Adams, James Flavin, Clyde Fillmore, Ralph Dunn, Grant Mitchell, Kathleen Howard, Lee Tung Foo, Cy Kendall, Harold Schlickemayer, Harry Strang, Lane Chandler.

DIRECTION, Fine. **PHOTOGRAPHY,** Fine.

Pete Egan Returned As Calgary Prexy

P. D. (Pete) Egan was unanimously returned as president of the Calgary Theatres Association at its recent annual meeting.

Captain A. E. Goldin is vice-president, J. K. Randall secretary-treasurer, and Les Litch business manager.

Executive members for 1945 are: K. M. Leach, J. B. Barron, L. J. Chown, G. W. Peacock and W. H. B. Sharp.

A vote of thanks was given to Egan for his work as president and L. J. Chown, who has resigned the office of secretary-treasurer, which he has held since the inception of the organization, was also offered the appreciation of his colleagues. He is secretary of the Alberta Theatres Association and this keeps him too busy.

Adventure In Music

with Jose Iturbi, Emanuel Feuermann,
Mildred Dilling, Vronsky and Babin, and
Coolidge String Quartet

Alliance Films 62 Mins.

**EXCELLENT OFFERING WHOSE
APPEAL IS STRONG FOR DEVOTEES
OF MUSIC EVERYWHERE.**

Millions of music lovers, always a very large increment of box-office potential, will enjoy this quality attraction immensely. It is a source of wonder to any professional film reviewer that features of this type, presenting a concert full of contrast and possessing compactness, have not appeared with frequency in the movie marts.

Featuring the renowned pianist, Jose Iturbi, along with Emanuel Feuermann, cellist, Mildred Dilling, harpist, Vronsky & Babin, duo-pianists, and the Coolidge String Quartet, "Adventure in Music" gives the theatre patron a perfect close-up of these artists in their respective renditions, as intimately near, in fact, as though he or she were actually at their very elbows. Every motion on key and string is clearly and intriguingly captured by the camera.

Its makers have seen to it that no monotony exists, and to accomplish this a group of four discriminating photographers weave constantly changing camera angles through each sequence. Among the selections by Iturbi are "Sevilla," by Albeniz, and Chopin's "Fantasie Impromptu." The remarkably co-ordinated Vronsky and Babin, presiding at twin pianos, play Brahms' "Waltz in A Flat," Arensky's "Waltz" and the brilliant novelty composition "Flight of the Bumble Bee," by Rimsky-Korsakoff.

Rendered by Feuermann is a group highlighted by Dvorak's "Rondo, Opus 94," and Popper's "Spinning Song," and by the Coolidge String Quartet, "Andante," by Von Dittersdorf and his "Fugue" from "Quartet in C Major." Mildred Dilling's group comprises Zabel's "The Fountain," the familiar Welsh air, "March of the Men of Harlech," and Hasselmans' "Fireflies."

Widespread bookings will be the good fortune of this film. It has, because of its nature, a high degree of permanence for screens. Direction and photography are thoroughly adequate, and the sound is faithful.

DIRECTION, Skilled. **PHOTOGRAPHY,** Ditto.

Mrs. Parkington

with Greer Garson, Walter Pidgeon
M-G-M 124 Mins.
**GARSON, PIDGEON HAPPILY TEAM-
ED IN WOMAN'S PICTURE CERTAIN
OF STRONG B. O.**

"Mrs. Parkington" again unites Greer Garson and Walter Pidgeon in a film stamped with quality. Leon Gordon has accorded a superb production to the Robert Thoren-Polly James adaptation of the Louis Bromfield novel, assembling a cast that matches the impressiveness of the physical aspects of the offering.

The picture directs the full force of its appeal to the femmes, who will revel in the drama and emotions set loose in the development of this tale of a social matriarch whose wealth is the cementing power in a family fallen into decadence. It is the strength of Mrs. Parkington's character that is the dominating force in the picture, to which Tay Garnett has applied a strong directorial hand that helps to make amends for some of the slow passages.

The story traces the rise of Mrs. Parkington from mining camp to drawing room, side by side with the man of her heart, a mine operator with an eye for feminine beauty. The relationship between husband and wife has been depicted uncommonly well.

As Mrs. Parkington, Miss Garson negotiates the transition from youth to old age effectively. Pidgeon brings a lot of charm to the role of her husband.

CAST: Greer Garson, Walter Pidgeon, Edward Arnold, Agnes Moorehead, Cecil Kellaway, Gladys Cooper, Frances Rafferty, Tom Drake, Peter Lawford, Dan Duray, Hugh Marlowe, Selena Royle, Fortunio Bonanova, Lee Patrick, Harry Cording, Celia Travers, Mary Servoss.

DIRECTION, Good. **PHOTOGRAPHY,** Fine.

Another 16 Mm. 'Sit'

Brussels, Ontario, will have a 16 mm. theatre in the near future. Building is being remodelled now.

**"TEST FILM, 10,000
cycles 35 mm., with easy
instructions, so that you
can focus your Sound
Lens in absolute precision
and secure clear sound
and the Maximum from
your sound System. Just
what many theatre own-
ers have longed for! Bar-
gain \$6.60."**

Our Hearts Were Young and Gay

with Gail Russell, Diana Lynn

Paramount 81 Mins.
**INCIDENTS IN LIVES OF TWO
YOUNG GIRLS APPEALING TO WOM-
EN AUDIENCES.**

The film version of the Cornelia Otis Skinner-Emily Kimbrough best-seller is a charming easy-going affair of considerable appeal to the femmes. The content of the film is much too mild to interest the men more than superficially.

This, the story of two young ladies tasting life in the 1920's, may profit from its ability to stir in one a memory of one's own youth. The film, without plot structure, is nothing more than a series of incidents in the lives of the Misses Skinner and Kimbrough directed at an unhurried pace by Lewis Allen. These incidents, which occur on a European trip, are depicted with humor. The girl's romantic experiences lend a note of sweetness to the film.

Sheridan Gibney gave the film a good production, succeeding especially well in capturing the atmosphere of the 1920's.

Miss Skinner is played by Gail Russell, while Miss Kimbrough is enacted by Diana Lynn. Both actresses are first-rate. Otis Skinner is played by Charlie Ruggles. Dorothy Gish comes back to the screen in the role of Mrs. Skinner.

CAST: Gail Russell, Diana Lynn, Charlie Ruggles, Dorothy Gish, Beulah Bondi, James Brown, Bill Edwards, Jean Heather, Alma Kruger, Helene Freeman, Joy Harrington, Valentine Perkins, Georges Renavent, Roland Varno, Holmes Herbert, Reginald Sheffield, Edmond Breon, Nina Koshetz.

DIRECTION, Good. **PHOTOGRAPHY,** Good.

Tubman Tells 'Em

Ray Tubman, Ottawa district manager for Famous Players, spoke on "The Moving Picture Industry" before the Hull, Quebec, Rotary Club recently. He discussed television, the theatre of tomorrow and the war effort of the industry.

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COMPLETE THEATRE SUPPLIES**
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WHO KNOWS US**

DOMINION THEATRE EQUIPMENT CO
847 DAVIE ST VANCOUVER B.C.

THE Odeon affair was mighty enjoyable. Clare Appel introduced Paul Nathanson who, after appropriate expressions of welcome, called on Leonard W. Brockington, K.C., famed Canadian and representative in this country of J. Arthur Rank. He remarked how appropriate at this time of year was the song which had preceded his remarks, "Coming Thro' the Rye," and suggested that he was speaking over "an international hiccup." He concluded with a serious note and the suggestion that the gathering send Christmas greetings to J. Arthur Rank and John Davis.

There was feasting, dancing and lucky drawing, the last supervised by the amiable Archie Laurie. There was also entertainment.

Sammy Sales, who played Santa Claus, was due to tell some gags at the dinner but there was too little time. He had one that would have gotten plenty of laughs — one related to the Empire circuit idea.

Paul Nathanson, Sales says, rushed up to a transatlantic taxi plane. "Where to?" asked the pilot.

"Any place," answered Paul. "I've got theatres everywhere!"

* * *

FPCC's affable Jackson Barker is a two-gun guy in the Graphic Arts game. He's the big shot of the circuit's art department and not exactly a cap pistol in the scribbling shoot. Jackson fills a columnful of space in FPCC's house organ, "What's New?" In his most recent effort The Barker tells of the succession of tough breaks he experienced in a single day, then bays: "We hope whoever put the whammy on us is satisfied. Could it be Evil Eye Bossin, the Banshee of Dundas Square?"

'Tweren't. These pooped-out peepers couldn't pick up a femme pass at two feet, let alone hang a hex on him at a distance of three long blocks and 12 storeys. Several times this Banshee did try to wail in the presence of Jackson but his sartorial sound system, of which his shirts are the shouts, reduced me to a whisper.

One of these days I will write his life story, perhaps under the title of "With Gaff and Gimmick Through Darkest Brushville or Jackson Barker's Brush With Life." It will be strictly a rags-to-riches routine, with a brush the symbol of his struggles and success. There must be a brush, for one is importantly related to his entering the art field.

Jackson, a good kid but a poor one, was deep in hock for his laundry and the patient Chino finally put the grab on him to

work it out. He was pressed into the press gang. Among his chores was marking laundry tickets with a brush. That was his introduction to the craft which he was to adorn with such distinction many years later.

Having finally washed his way out of the jackpot, Jackson made immediate use of his new-found facility with a brush by taking a job marking lottery tickets. He marked them in such personally prosperous fashion that his boss went broke and Jack's bookmaker remarked "I'm glad that guy can't shuffle horses."

Between then and now is where the story really is and I have no room here. However, it was during his laundry days that he began his famed interest in music, having composed "When the Bluing of the Night Meets the Starch of the Dawn" to the peculiar rhythm of Cantonese mixed with washboard sounds.

(Note—If anyone without a sense of humor reads the above, do not take it literally. Just send me a self-addressed envelope and I will answer your questions).

* * *

THEY say the Hanson Christmas party was quite an affair, there being 100 at Charlie Mavey's ranch. The Hon. Earl Lawson, K.C., was toastmaster and among the guests were O. J. Silverthorne, Ontario censor; Paul Nathanson, George Beeston and Alf Perry; Norton Ritchey of New York, a vice-president of Monogram; H. T. O'Neill, manager of the Royal Bank of Canada; L. W. Boothe, RCA Victor, Montreal, and Ed Auger, RCA Victor, New York; Cecil Snyder, deputy attorney-general of Ontario; Hellman Swards of Montreal; Ray Lewis, D. J. Ongley; H. P. Green, J. J. Robinette and S. H. Fleming.

Best time was had by Oscar Hanson himself, he having the additional pleasure of knowing that his flock was having a swell time.

* * *

FAMOUS PLAYERS' party, at the King Edward this time, was on par with similar festivities in the past—which meant it was good. Speechmaking was kept at a minimum. J. J. Fitzgibbons and Rube Bolstad, at the call of Syl Gunn, passed their greetings to the crowd and that was that.

After that fun was the order of the evening.



THE Square was alive with office parties during the holiday week. Twentieth Century Theatres and Paramount each provided a lively afternoon. At Twentieth Century Theatres the board room was the scene of the fun, much of it visual because of the personal verse and cartoons by Leo Danson, brother of Booker Flo Simmons. Nat Taylor's associates and employees had a mighty fine time and made many a visitor welcome.

There was a grand time at Paramount, too, where Gordon Lightstone let anyone who wished win a verbal decision over him—proof that the Christmas spirit can accomplish miracles. Too bad Simon Meretsky of Windsor wasn't on hand. He was—in name only. Hugh Burns and the boys presented Gordon with a charcoal drawing of himself and on one side it bore the name of Simon Meretsky as the artist.

Man of the hour wasn't Lightstone but Harry Painter, Jr., whose love of music is expressed through his feet instead of a fiddle—as is the case with his pop. Junior saved the old crocks many a creak by doing most of the dancing with those lovely Paramount girls.

Best Paramount Christmas story is about Ambrose Thierer. His boy was probably the most surprised Canadian soldier over-

seas. Ambrose packed a Yuletide parcel for him and shipped it from the office. That is, he thought he did.

It turned out that he sent a parcel containing 250 reel bands instead.

* * *

ILYA EHRENBURG wrote some words worth remembering in an article called "Liberation." These are they:

"Fascism is not confined to Germany nor even to fascists—it is something wider and more dangerous. It knows how to adopt good disguises and to assume an air of gentle breeding. But we have learned to sense it from afar. We know what racial hatred, arrogance, the cult of brute force and amorality lead to. We know that fascism begins with seemingly innocent prejudices and ends with Maidaneks."

There are many Canadians who have these "seemingly innocent prejudices" about one or the other of the races and creeds that make up our population—which means that these citizens and non-citizens have them about each other.

Yet I think that of all who belong to this poisoned world in a large or small way, the worst are the Condoners. This unhappy breed, judging by what happened in Europe, is made up of persons of those races and religions which are the first to suffer when those "seemingly innocent prejudices" become extermination camps. They see prejudices in people who are associated with them, yet continue to make those people powerful because their capabilities yield a profit. If these users of poisoned humans were of sound moral character, and if greed had not poisoned their logic, they would either help remove the poison or fight the application of it by people over whom they have authority.

There are some things bigger than financial profit — and race prejudice is not confined to that part of the world beyond the film business. And the Canadian equivalent of the Collaborationist is the Condoner.

* * *

JUST ran across some correspondence from Leo Clavir of Artkino—you know, "The Rainbow" man. He encloses (a) one of our headlines which reads "Asks 'Fair Break' For GB Film," (b) a note which says that "Everyone is asking something these days" and (c) a headline from a BC paper, The Fisherman, which says "Ask More For Herring."

Is friend Clavir suggesting that I am hard of herring? Make yourself plain, sir, shmaltz or marinated?



OSCAR R. HANSON

He heads the organization committee of eleven appointed by a recent meeting to help establish a branch of the Variety Clubs of America in Toronto.


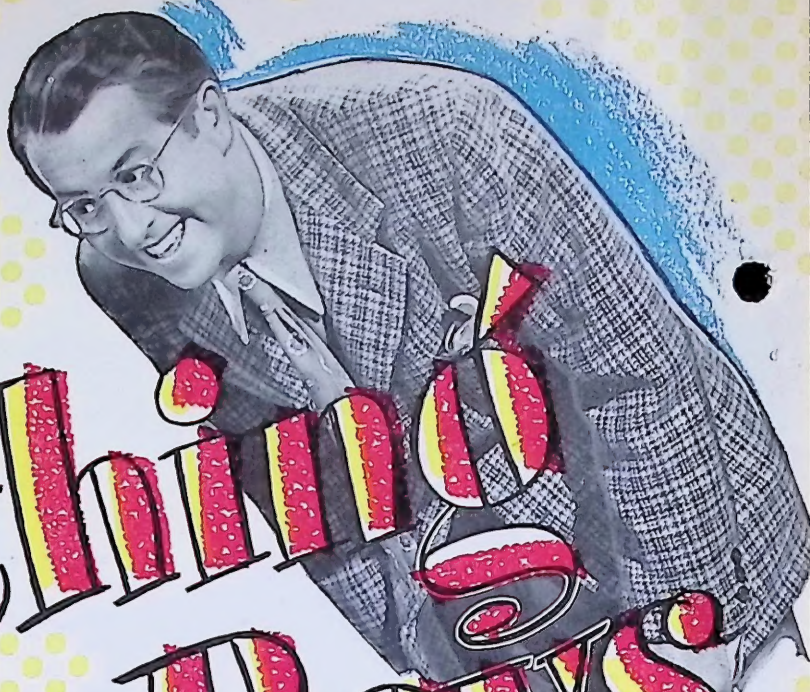


EARL
MORAN



LOOK WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU!

VIVIAN BLAINE, The Cherry Blonde



SOMETHING FOR THE BOYS

...something terrific
-and in **TECHNICOLOR**-
to top all the
gross-topping
musicals from...



CARMEN MIRANDA • MICHAEL O'SHEA
VIVIAN BLAINE (The Cherry Blonde) in "SOMETHING
FOR THE BOYS" with Phil Silvers • Sheila Ryan • Perry
Como • Glenn Langan • Directed by LEWIS SEILER
Produced by IRVING STARR in Technicolor
Screen Play by Robert Ellis, Helen Logan and Frank Gabrielson
Based on the Musical Comedy Book by Herbert and Dorothy Fields
Cole Porter Songs • Music and Lyrics New Songs by Jimmy McHugh
and Harold Adamson • Dances Staged and Directed by Nick Castle



20
in
CENTURY-FOX

KEEP SELLING BONDS!

THE tall fellow was led shambling into the ward by two medical attendants and seated in a chair near the portable screen. He submitted passively to this as he had done to everything since the day when the searing, scorching hell that was El Alemein had beaten him to his knees and his mind had sought the subconscious refuge from torture which is known to the medical world as "battle shock." In the field hospital, during transportation back to the United States and for months of treatment in the General Hospital, his mind stubbornly refused to leave the walled retreat which it had built as a defense against remembering the agony of that last battle, a battle which had left his body whole but his mind completely oblivious to what went on around him; which had robbed him of memory of wife and parents and friends. Now it had been decided to have him present at one of the movies which the Red Cross shows regularly in the hospital wards.

With eyes fixed vacantly on the floor, he failed to notice the dimming of the lights as the picture began to unroll on the screen. It was a picture typical of those shown in hospitals — plenty of music, comedy and pretty girls. Ten minutes passed. Then, as the sprightly star began to sing a popular song, he raised his head and stared absently at the screen before him. Only for a minute, though, and then he went back to his contemplation of the floor. In a few more minutes his eyes wandered back to the screen and before long he was attentively watching what went on before him. His attendants nodded to each other in suppressed excitement and, when the lights went on, they did not offer to lead him back to his own ward but wisely waited and were rewarded by seeing him rise to his feet unaided and walk out of the room.

In a few days, when he had orientated himself to the world to which he had been reborn, this soldier patient sought out the Red Cross worker in charge to express to her his gratitude for what that one movie had done for him. It had been this typical and favorite form of American entertainment which had pierced into his subconscious mind and brought back to him the knowledge that there were in the world, besides the dreaded experiences of battle, such things as music, laughter and pretty girls, and reawakened in him the will to partake once more of life.

That is an instance of the unexpected benefits obtained in some cases through a medium primarily recreational. The distribution of motion pictures for showing in hospitals at home and



Films Follow The Flag

overseas is but one phase of the job of keeping our service men and women supplied with this type of entertainment.

THE supplying of motion picture entertainment to Canadian canteens, military establishments and rest centres behind the battle lines is an arduous and complicated task carried on by a number of public-spirited organizations. In the beginning it was an almost-impossible task because 16 mm. equipment was the only type that was practicable and films of that gauge were limited in number compared with the need.

To facilitate the task of supplying entertainment the Navy, Army, Air Force Films Committee was formed under the authority of the Department of National Defence. The committee was comprised of the following organizations: Auxiliary Services Department National Defence, Canadian Legion War Services, Knights of Columbus Army Huts, Salvation Army War Services, and YMCA War Services.

The manner in which the problem of films was overcome is shown by the fact that in 1940 there was a total for all Canada of 89 camp movie shows per week with an attendance of 46,105. In 1944 the number of shows is 1,897 and attendance is 488,902.

It was through the late N. L. Nathanson, honorary chairman of the committee, that the matter of a sufficient number of films was settled. At his request almost every Hollywood studio undertook to print 16 mm. versions of their best features for army use and some entered the small-gauge field for the first time.

A gratifying aspect of the solution was that these 16 mm. films were made for the aid and comfort of Canadians by the industry of a country not yet at war—a frank statement of partisanship.

FILMS follow the flags of every country with an army in the field and this is true of Canada. Charged with the distribution and exhibition of films for Canada's armed forces overseas is the Salvation Army. Its workers make sure that Canadians in Italy, France and Britain see the newest of films.

Until recently prints for these purposes were made through British technical facilities from USA negatives. A crisis arose which was dissipated by the generosity of our cousins to the south.

The British found that, because of various contingencies, they could no longer supply the Salvation Army. When news of this reached Canada, Brigadier Fairhurst of the Salvation Army,

Captain Gurston Allen of the CASF and F. O. Frank Vaughn of the RCAF journeyed to New York and appealed to Francis F. Harmon of the War Activities Committee of the motion picture industry.

It was an important hurdle they had to overcome. For example, in August, 1944, there were 1,845 shows and 625,536 admissions to Canadian men and women in Britain.

Although pressed to supply American needs, Harmon accepted the responsibility of providing Canadians in Britain with films. And what's more, Canadians at the battlefield are being serviced by USA motion picture army service.

Aren't those lovely neighbors to have?

The YMCA, through its War Prisoners Aid Committee, has been shipping films to prisoners of war in German-occupied territory. The total number of prisoners of all nationalities is now between six and seven millions.

Newsreels and war films are excluded from the shipments because of enemy regulations. The entertainment films provide relief from monotony and a form of escape.

THE most unusual plan for the supplying of movie entertainment to a branch of the armed forces in that of the Royal Canadian Navy. In July, 1943, a brief ceremony at a Canadian port marked the inauguration of the Royal Canadian Naval Film Society as an operating unit.

Through it ships, which usually sail in groups, exchange films at sea and restock with features when they return to port. There Naval bookers, most of them drawn from the Canadian motion picture industry, see that new features are made available.

Sailors make a voluntary contribution of five cents per program and officers 25 cents. The Society is self-supporting, owns its own projection equipment and is independent of other service groups. In effect, it is a sea-going film circuit. Prints are leased from the exchanges and insurance is carried on them. The films are 16 mm.

EVERY cooperation has been given by the Canadian motion picture industry and the willingness to provide advice and assistance when difficulties arise is a guarantee that those charged with providing film entertainment for the troops will continue to carry on the task in adequate fashion. Several times in the past representatives of the services and the exchanges have held joint meetings to improve some phase of the work.

Films will continue to follow the flag to victory.



"LEO BE PRAISED!"



The record-breaking ASTOR performance of M-G-M's KISMET has been repeated in every subsequent showing...so now get ready to give your engagement the tops in showmanship for a long and happy run. Another hit from Leo!



Amusement Tax For Ontario

(Continued from Page 1)

pected to yield about \$2,500,000 for the \$18,000,000 the provincial government requires to set up its long-promised educational subsidies.

Classified by the then premier, Mitchell Hepburn, as "a nuisance tax" when he cancelled it, the amusement tax was disapproved of generally. Its removal won endorsement beyond the bounds of the province also. One Montreal paper printed an editorial against that type of tax and, referring to Hepburn's action, commented: "There are probably none of these 'nuisance taxes' which has called forth louder or more prolonged protest from the general public than that upon amusements."

It is expected that the tax, if reapplied in Ontario, would be the same as before. The scale then was one cent on 15 and under, two cents on 25 and under, three cents on 35 and under, five cents on 45 and under, 10 cents on 80 and under, 16 cents on \$1.50 and under. Children under 16 were exempted.

Ontario and Saskatchewan are the only provinces without a provincial amusement tax, although in the latter, Moose Jaw, Regina, Saskatoon and Weyburn have a municipal amusement tax and North Battleford charges the exhibitor \$500 in lieu of an amusement tax.

Sask. Licence Fees Up For Halls, Etc.

Hon. C. C. Williams, who has jurisdiction over the Theatres and Cinematographs act of Saskatchewan, recommended an increase in public hall license fees and this comes into effect after January 1.

Operators of public halls in cities now pay 1½ cent per foot instead of two dollars yearly—in some cases a jump of about \$100. The fee in towns and villages was formerly one dollar. Now it's five and \$10.

IODE Opens \$300,000 Drive for Books

The IODE begins a drive on January 4 for \$300,000, the money to be devoted to the purchase of books for the boys and girls in Canada's armed services overseas. From \$4,000 to \$5,000 is spent every week for this purpose.

Associated Screen News completed a trailer in connection with the drive and theatre men who boost it will find their efforts greatly appreciated.

Sask Distrib Area May Be Created

(Continued from Page 1)

in Canada than in the United States. Although our country is actually larger in area than our neighbor, Canada, according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, had 1,269 theatres in 1943, while the United States had over 20,000. It is obviously a much easier and less costly matter to transfer prints from one theatre to another in the United States than here.

This and other arguments have been made to the Saskatchewan government against the plan.

Committees Meet

Recently representatives of the Winnipeg Film Board of Trade met with those of the Saskatchewan government to discuss the matter of moving distribution headquarters. On hand for the government were the Hon. C. C. Williams, minister of labor and in charge of the theatre and cinematographs act; J. H. Williams, deputy minister of labor; and J. Andrucovitch, Northern Saskatchewan theatre inspector.

The film men pointed out that the government would let itself in for considerable expense in establishing censorship offices in Regina. Its representatives said censorship fees would be raised to take care of that. The reply of the film men was that fewer prints might be made as a means of keeping their costs down. This would slow playoffs in Saskatchewan theatres.

Higher costs caused by increased censorship fees and greater distribution costs arising from a purely Saskatchewan service would be passed on to the exhibitor.

The government representatives did not seem concerned with anything but an increase in provincial revenue and greater employment in the province. They pointed out that the Dominion government got almost all the benefits of theatre and film taxation and the province wasn't getting a fair share.

Exhibs, Distribs Meet

A committee from the Winnipeg Board of Trade will meet with one from the Saskatchewan Exhibitors Association to talk things over. The situation affects a number of provinces, for it may have an upsetting effect on the entire Canadian distribution system if the Saskatchewan change takes place.

The Winnipeg exchange centre serves theatres in Manitoba, Ontario and Saskatchewan and the Calgary centre takes care of houses in Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia and North-West Territory.

The St. John centre handles Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland.

If other provinces were forced to follow the Saskatchewan system, the price of film would go up in most of Canada.

Film men are firm in their opposition to the Saskatchewan government's plan. The government, under provincial law, has the right to take and operate any business. But there are no films made in Saskatchewan and the exchanges are under no compulsion to ship into the province. It is unlikely, however, that the first great opposition to government-in-business will grow out of this difference of opinion.

UAC, Montreal Has Good Year

United Amusement Corporation, Limited, has issued notice of intention to redeem on February 1, 1945, at 102¼ and accrued interest, all of its 5 per cent 20-year first mortgage sinking fund bonds, due February 1, 1956. The amount of such bonds now outstanding is \$1,267,000. Plans are understood to be under way for a refunding issue.

United Amusement Corp., which operates some 35 "neighborhood" movie theatres located in the Montreal area, Sherbrooke, St. Hyacinthe and St. Johns, has shown a substantial margin of earnings over bond interest requirements. For the year ended December 31, 1943, net profit, after depreciation and taxes but before bond interest, was in excess of \$262,000, or almost four times bond interest requirements of around \$66,000.

At the close of 1943 the company showed a comfortable financial position, with current assets of \$569,599 against current liabilities of \$115,469, indicating net working capital of \$454,130, a substantial improvement over the preceding year's figure of \$312,071. Current assets mentioned above included \$373,710 in cash and \$125,000 in Dominion Government bonds.

Judging by the fact that the company this year paid \$1 a share on its 80,829 shares of outstanding capital stock, as compared with 80 cents in the preceding year, the report for 1944 should indicate continued favorable results.

Staff Praised By F. G. Spencer

(Continued from Page 1)

Apparently Mr. Spencer did not wish any confusion to arise about the future of his present employees, associates and executives under the new arrangement. Coincident with the announcement he issued the following statement:

While acknowledging the merits of those responsible for the success of Famous Canadian Players Canadian Corporation, I would like to pay tribute to those who have been so loyally and intelligently helpful to me over the years, and on whom, at an age when most men have the urge to retire, I have been able to lean with confidence.

In J. G. Armstrong, who in the capacity of secretary-treasurer has been associated with me for many years, I have enjoyed a much appreciated tower of strength and excellent judgment; and the very many who regularly make contact with our head office in Saint John readily realize and comment on my good fortune in having as associates Miss Irene Malloy, Miss Mary Ellis and Miss Helen Crowley, to whose competent co-operation I would like also to pay tribute.

In the operation of our various theatres in Saint John and elsewhere I have been most fortunate with respect to managers and those employed under them, all of whom I think of as personal friends, as I do my associates at head office, and from whom I would not care to part. Any little success I may have enjoyed has been because of good fortune in selecting associates possessing qualifications in which I am lacking.

This all had a bearing on my refraining from selling control of the Spencer Company, preferring to have it perpetuated as a Maritime institution for the benefit of my two sons and those who have contributed so loyally to its success throughout the years.

Through the medium of the Spencer Company, beside protecting the Spencer Company's interests, the Famous Players Canadian Corporation and the Spencer Company together will develop in the Maritimes when opportunity presents itself, except with regard to locations in which Famous Players already are operating, such as Saint John, Halifax, etc.

Bldg. Priority For UK Houses?

(Continued from Page 1)

waiting for soldiers and war workers as soon as the war is over. Theatre building calls for help from more trades than almost any other industry, yet many of the trades that will be employed will not be required in the building of houses. Also the work is not concentrated but spread across the nation.

There is no doubt that the parliamentary post-war planning committee will have something to say about projects designed to create work or rebuilding and expansion on the part of private industry. The aim is to prevent unemployment from lingering on until it becomes a depression.

In Britain the Cinema Exhibitors Association has been studying post-war theatre building,

Lester Cowan

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A totally different kind of story brings you a new entertainment thrill
with a dramatic impact that will startle the world. A story which might
happen to you... to your family... in your home... in your town tomorrow!

TOMORROW- THE WORLD!

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FREDRIC BETTY
MARCH ★ FIELD
with AGNES MOOREHEAD
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